



News Release

Army Scientific Advisor Dr. James Valdes Wins Presidential Rank Award

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Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. – Dr. James J. Valdes, the U.S. Army's scientific advisor for biotechnology, received a Presidential Rank award for 2003 at a ceremony in the Pentagon on March 12, 2004. With his receipt of this award, Dr. Valdes joins an exclusive group of career government personnel honored by this recognition of exceptional professional accomplishment.

Dr. Valdes is located at the U.S. Army Edgewood Chemical Biological Center at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Throughout his career, Dr. Valdes has made original and creative scientific contributions in biotechnology and neurochemistry that have resulted in significant impacts within these fields. As the author of more than 100 scientific articles, Dr. Valdes has received international recognition in scientific journals and at prestigious symposia. He is a sought-after speaker and consultant for the private sector. Dr. Valdes' leadership in defining strategic direction for Army scientific initiatives and building the Army's biotechnology infrastructure and staff has had a major impact on biodefense research at ECBC and throughout the Joint Services. His work is particularly focused in the area of detecting biological threat agents and identification of their long-term effects.

The Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee and the Vice Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey presented the award, which was signed by President George W. Bush. Award winners are chosen through a rigorous selection process that includes nomination by their agency heads, evaluation by boards of private citizens, and approval by the president. The evaluation criteria focus on leadership and results.

According to the Office of Personnel Management, a small group of high-performing senior career employees are recognized each year with the Presidential Rank Award for exceptional long-term accomplishments. Winners of this prestigious award are strong leaders, professionals, and scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry, and commitment to excellence in public service. This year marked the first time Scientific Professionals, including Senior Technical personnel such as Dr. Valdes, were eligible for the Presidential Rank award, which was previously only given to members of the Senior Executive Service.

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ECBC is the Army's principal research and development center for non-medical chemical and biological defense technology, engineering and services. ECBC has achieved major technological advances for national defense, civilian needs and industrial competitiveness, with a long and distinguished history of providing the Armed Forces with quality systems and outstanding customer service. ECBC is located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. For more information about the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center, please visit our Web site at <http://www.ecbc.army.mil> or call (410) 436-3610.